

Bodine (J. M.)

# "What am I?"

## A VALEDICTORY ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES

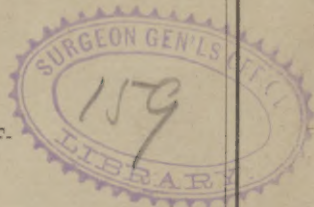
DELIVERED AT THE CLOSE OF THE

FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE,<sup>1</sup>  
FEBRUARY 28, 1878.

By J. M. BODINE, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY AND OPERATIVE SURGERY OF THE EYE, AND DEAN OF THE FACULTY.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.



*Bodine*

LOUISVILLE, KY.:

PRINTED BY JOHN P. MORTON AND COMPANY.

1878.



# "WHAT AM I?"

## A VALEDICTORY ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES

DELIVERED AT THE CLOSE OF THE

FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE,  
FEBRUARY 28, 1878.

By J. M. BODINE, M. D.

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY AND OPERATIVE SURGERY OF THE EYE, AND DEAN OF THE FACULTY.

---

LOUISVILLE, KY.:

PRINTED BY JOHN P. MORTON & COMPANY.

1878.





## "WHAT AM I?"

---

### *Gentlemen of the Graduating Class:*

If what I am about to say to you appears to be inappropriate from an abstract point of view, it will, perhaps, assume another complexion if you but reflect that we stand, as it were, in the shadow of death.

We have had sounded in our ears the solemn litany, "In the midst of life we are in death." Five, who, in the heyday of hope, started in the race with you for commencement honors, have fallen by the way and left us to follow a little farther on in the caravan that moves to the pale realms of shade, and there spread with them our "silent tents" on the camping-grounds of death.

Grateful and reverential memory also brings up the venerable form of the last of the founders of this institution, whose noble life honored our profession, who has lately died, loved and lamented, whose funeral honors various cities repeat, and whose well-deserved eulogium is to be pronounced in our sorrowing hearing ere we part.

Having reached a golden autumn, we can discern, with less embarrassment to reason, *why* this ripe shock of wisdom and skill was gathered to the garner; but *why* the morning flowers, with the dew of promise upon them,

should fade and fall, suggests an inquiry that baffles thought, and can only be compassed by faith. The question very naturally arises, "What am I?" and whither do I tend?

Is life, indeed, but a vanishing vapor? Or does man live on to grow in knowledge, to expand in capacity, and to broaden in bliss?

If death ends all, then how vain seem all earthly pursuits, and especially the desire that leads men to endeavor to thread the labyrinths of science!

If more than matter—more than vital organization—if immortal, then no doom is hopeless, and death is the door to delight.

These and kindred thoughts press from the soul of every man the serious inquiry "What am I?"

The brute and insect creation make no mistakes in life, but each one fulfills its destiny—

"Like as a star  
That maketh not haste,  
That taketh not rest,  
And each one fulfilling  
His God-given 'hest."

Instinct is a fixed and invariable intelligence in the animal or insect by which it is enabled to perform necessary acts in a perfect way, and is not the product of reasoning or in any respect voluntary, but it is the Divine law implanted in the lower animals as the governing principle of their being, and from which they can not depart. It can not degenerate; it can not be improved. By these natural and God-given endowments each animal species is enabled to hold its place in the world against all ordinary contingencies. The young



bee, for instance, comes into existence with a physical organism adequate to the work it must do, and the architecture and industry of every honey-comb and hive are patterned after the same and perfect principles of Geometry and Political Economy that have governed all bees since they were winged amid the sweets of the Garden of Eden. It is fully endowed from birth with instinctive impulses and capabilities adequate to inaugurating, continuing, and completing all the work and relations possible to its existence. While physiological forces perfect by fixed laws its animal organization, instinctive forces adjust its relations to all other members of the bee community, to the seasons, to its sources of supply and capacity for production.

Man has, perhaps, two instincts; namely, to feed and to self-preservation. But man is a reasoning being. The power to progress from the merest elements of knowledge up to the highest achievements of educated mind, and at the greatest heights of learning to take ravishing views of far-stretching and unexplored fields, is the quality which differentiates him—together with moral convictions based upon intellectual apprehension of truth, duty, and destiny—from the brute creation. Man has the power to adapt means to ends. A correct apprehension of right ends, and of the proper means of attaining them, constitute the supreme function and felicity of reason.

The comparison of judgments leading from a major through a minor premise to a correct conclusion is syllogistic reasoning, or *logic*. The broadest definition that can be given of logic is the art of detecting error and enforcing truth. The science of logic is the classified knowledge we have concerning those acts and processes

of the mind intervening our observation of facts and axioms and the farthest removed deductions and the largest generalizations. The power to reason accurately is the grandest of all talents, and the richest reward of patient and persevering study. It is this power that has uplifted the mountain-minds on the plain of human history. It is this power that has enabled man to float the waters and ferry the deep, to sink the shafts and rear the columns of science, to tame the elements and harness them to the car of progress; to analyze the mind and body, to apprehend the laws of life, the agents for the mitigation of pain, and for the prevention and cure of disease. All that beautifies and blesses society we owe to cultured reason. The illogical mind degrades man, and tends toward a plane even below the level of the brute. The barbarian is generally unthinking, or his reason ranges a narrow field. All civilization is but the expression of the triumph of human reason. This victory Art monuments, Poetry sings, and Science jewels. Errors in reasoning generally result from argumentation based upon a superficial survey or a partial collection of facts. The most correct and exhaustive reasoning is always the product of the largest induction. The programme of investigation is: First, observation; second, experiment; third, inference drawn from a number of facts of the same class, and inference drawn from a fact which either belongs, or is assumed to belong, to a specific class. To employ the first method we have simply to use our senses; the second, we must, for example, use our forge, crucible, etc., in the analysis of substances, or try the effect of a class of motives on a large number of men; for the third, or inductive, we must employ the



analogical method, as the spectrum-reader is enabled to construct the mineral geography of a distant world. Reasoning from a few correlated facts is the supreme source of error, and men of culture are not free from the dominating power of this specious sophistry. The scientific enthusiast is prone to overlook the fact that he is not a universalist but a specialist, and that the very observations and studies that have made him a scientist confine his experience to a narrow range, which he essays to apply to hypotheses that belong to different and diverse fields of investigation. A moment's reflection will enable any candid man to see that almost any thing can be established or overthrown by the consideration of a limited number of particulars. To first view the earth seems a plane; a larger observation of facts leads to the conclusion that it is a globe. Some men have succeeded in the learned professions without being trained in the schools; ergo, the self-made man is superior to the graduate.

The Breton mariner, when he puts to sea, prays, "Keep me, my God; my boat is so small and the ocean so wide." So should we be modest in the expression of opinion, for the continent of facts and the sea of principles are very large, and we are limited in the range of observation and faltering and feeble in the treatment of facts. The investigator in every department of science should be humble and careful, ever remembering that the One Infinite mind only grasps the universal, and that man in his intellectual relations to many problems is just where he was at the beginning—

"An infant crying in the night,  
An infant crying for the light,  
And with no language but a cry."

I could wish there was more in medical studies, as ordinarily pursued, to cultivate the logical powers. The student first reads and readily receives the dictum of authority. The next step is simply one of observation. The student examines the skeleton, and his eye and memory take and treasure all the lore it has to impart. From the dry bones he goes to the cadaver, which, while it excites curiosity and reveals wonders, simply demands discrimination and skillful manipulation with the knife. Next he is introduced to the laboratory, where every thing is a matter of sense and experiment. All these stages of instruction are demonstrative, leaving no room for hypothesis, no ground for premises. Finally, he goes to therapeutics, practical medicine, and surgery, and these are largely taught synthetically and objectively, and so his opportunity is small of becoming acquainted with the science and adept in the art of logic. It is true, too, that many of our young men enter upon the study of medicine with insufficient previous training in intellectual gymnastics. A knowledge of Latin was formerly deemed a scholarly prerequisite to the study of medicine, and the pupil had the advantage of well-disciplined powers with which to begin. The study of this beautiful language, which crystallizes the technique of the medical art, trains the mind to abstraction, and by the difficulties of construction and grammatical analysis, and by tracing derivatives through their inflexions to their verbal roots, cultivates the habit of discerning relations and pursuing things and thoughts to their sources. Such a study superinduces the logical habit. If all our physicians were trained dialecticians, and would not only collate, but compare and generalize facts, what strides

our profession would make in developing the hygienic and healing art!

There have been, and are, in our profession, men who were dialectically the equals of any, and it is largely to their powers of abstraction and argumentation that we owe all the knowledge we have.

"Doctors disagree." That has passed into a proverb. But it is more because, like the knights at the crossing of the way, they see opposite sides of the shield. The habit is to meet dictum with dictum, experience with experience, rather than *reason* with *reason*. If you have not already done so, I invite you to make logic one of your post-graduate studies. At any rate, acquire the habit of abstracting yourself from your environment and reading attentively, reflectively, appropriatingly, and assimilatively. Do not fall into the pernicious error that a physician should concentrate all his time and talents *directly* upon his profession. No man has become eminent in any vocation of life who has not possessed general and diversified information. Some one has said, "It is better to know every thing about something, than something about every thing;" yet so closely correlated are all sciences, natural and mental and moral, that to know every thing about something *is* to know something about every thing. Not only does the science of medicine include a knowledge of the stereotyped seven departments as they appear in our curriculum, but has close and indivisible relations to the laws of mind and the effect of moral motivities upon life. The physician must understand logic, that he may trace the relations between cause and effect, and distinguish the *non causa* from the *pro causa*.



I need not catalogue the books you may profitably read. All works that include more than they syllable, that make the mind halt ere it passes and compel it to wrestle with an idea for its mastery, and that suggest, richly, reflections of your own, are of the greatest worth.

Strive by observation, reading, and reflection to arrive at that point of dialectical excellence at which you will be able readily to analyze propositions, eliminate ambiguities, correlate facts, and thus, by seeing truth in new relations and combinations, to unite the varied prismatic rays that form the perfect light. Ponder *principles* with a view of finding new and valuable applications of them, of detecting sophisms to discard them, and thus become *facile princeps* in the interpretation of phenomena, the diagnosis of disease, and the formulation of remedies. See that your mind is not a mere reservoir to receive and retain, but rather a great furnace in which all dross shall be consumed and the value of every thing tried as by fire.

A school of opinion claiming to be scientific, most prominently represented, perhaps, by Dr. Buechner, of Germany, has of late been growing, which assumes to hold on rational grounds not only the essential unity of all life, but the dogma in its fullest scope that life is always and wholly the product of organization, ceasing utterly when the organic autonomy fails. "The only immortality of man," says the ablest exponent of this new view, "is the immortality of men," *i. e.* of the race. This is a play upon words, which signifies nothing, for not only do we know that no living personality has stake in *such* a future, but we know that

races and *worlds* are as surely mortal as individuals. The whole history of humanity will vanish from the face of the universe, an unrecorded and forgotten thing, unless written in some Spiritual Remembrance. That over all that platform of existence which we *see*, life is *associated* with structure, is no proof whatever that it is the product of carbon, haloids, and gases. No surgeon's probe or savant's chemistry has ever made contact with *life*. In all forms the subtle essence illudes the instrumentations that interrogate and torture *matter*. Away with the mechanical theory that, looking alone to the sun, sums up the beginning, duration, and end of man, in that fantastic formula, "from fiery cloud to fiery cloud." Shall every unconscious atom of the material universe be thus vested with immortality, and against every analogy known, intelligence, love, and duty alone be doomed to die? Far wiser and more likely appears to me the statement embodying the earlier and nearly universal faith of mankind: "The *dust* shall *return* to the earth *as it was*; and the *spirit* shall *return* unto God who *gave* it."

I think you will pardon me if I warn you here and now not to fall into the dangerous error of concluding that the Bible is a cunningly-devised fable, because you can not subject it to the same experimental tests you employ in the medical art. Religion has its tests, "If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine, etc." Because there are a multiplicity of sects you must not hold Christianity responsible. Remember that Hydropathy, Homeopathy, and Thomsonianism are sects in medicine, and that we do not conclude from the variety and variances of the schools that there is

no medical science. Because there are hypocritical professors, do not conclude that there are no genuine Christians. Remember that medicine, too, has its pretenders, empirics, and charlatans. Because there are mysteries in the Scriptures do not reject its plain and unmistakable truth. As well refuse to see the functions of the great organs in the human body because you are perplexed to discern the office of the spleen or to trace the relations between the molecular motions of the brain and the outgoings of thought. And is it not apposite in this place to inquire whether the indisposition of medical men to investigate the claims of revealed religion does not arise from the fact that their intellectual powers are so closely confined to induction and analogy, to the almost total exclusion of moral reasoning? It is worth while to notice the variability of human methods of reasoning when applied to religion—the alternations of the transcendental and realistic schools of scepticism—while Christianity remains massive, sublime, and unscathed, like the pyramids of the Lybian desert. No argument of scepticism has stood the test of time. Says Emerson: "Once you saw Phoenixes; they are gone. Once our teachers were angels of knowledge, and their figures touched the sky. Then we drew near, saw their means, culture and limits, and they yielded their places to other geniuses."

But the Great Physician of Souls, against whose system the mighty men of philosophy, science, and historical criticism set themselves, stands, still the central figure of time, while the challenge rings out over the fields of investigation as clear and clarion-toned as when it pealed like a trumpet of doom in the ear of perplexed Pilate, "What will you do with Christ?"



For all those diseases of the mind and heart which are beyond and baffle the pathology and therapeutics of the art to which we this day introduce you, the Great Physician presents the only healing balm, the only panacea for those pains more acute than any that ever ran along the quivering nerves.

It is fabled that the pillars of Seth withstood the waters of an universal deluge, and remained erect and witnessed the retiring waters of that flood which had swallowed up all other monuments of antiquity. So has the Gospel survived the fury of that flood which has swept over all philosophies and religions which have challenged its Divine supremacy. The fact of the "survival" of Christianity proves it the "fittest" religion for man; and considering its humble origin, and the humble instrumentalities employed in planting it in the world, it is a standing miracle more wonderful than any the Evangelists record. I would have you remember, young gentlemen, that Theology and Christianity are two things. The exposure of the errors or overthrow of the theories of the former does not necessarily affect the Christian system any more than the exposure of the partial reasoning of medical partialists affects the great science of which you are disciples. Even should Mr. Darwin establish his singular and startling hypothesis, it would not affect the integrity of the first chapter of Genesis. Moses says God made man of the dust, and by a second creative act made him "in His image." Mr. Darwin starts the origin of man in an animated atom, and through a chain of developing species brings him to his present high estate. As following Moses literally, God made an animal a living soul by an inspiring breath, so

the successor of the highest anthropoid might have been made rational, moral, and immortal by a like interposition of Divine power. One puts an inconceivable duration between the first creative act and the climax of development, and the other seems to imply that the interval was a short one. But as Geology gave a new rendering to the Mosaic cosmogony, turning the literal day into an eon, and Philology has rescued the Bible account of creation from the oblivion with which, at first, Geology threatened it so I do not see that the establishment of Mr. Darwin's theory of the origin of species need to disturb our faith in the Bible.

It is worth while to remind you that Mr. Darwin is a communicant in the Church of England. The essential religion of Christianity will not die out of the human soul. Sooner expect the sun, which clouds may for a time obscure, to flicker out of the sky. *No, no*, the advances of thought will only serve to rift the intervening clouds and the breath of candid criticism to float the sun-dyed fragments away, and in the end the Sun of Righteousness will shine down with not a mist between to obscure the vision of faith. I am constrained to confess that, as a consequence of the nature of the studies pursued by medical men and the lack of logical training, our profession, of all others, is *most* prone to scepticism.

The reason of this is complex. Part of it results from the pride of philosophy which is common to professional pursuits; part of it is, in consequence of familiarity with human suffering, the custom of regarding man simply as a pain-afflicted animal, and of observing the phenomena incident to the decay and dissolution of

the physical powers; part from frequent and forced absence from public worship inseparable from the nature of the practitioner's duties, and principally, as I believe, from the neglect to employ purely logical methods of thought. The physician is so concerned with the body that he seldom penetrates to the spirit.

The distinguished mechanician Vaucanson had his taste for mechanics aroused by accident. As a punishment, when a child, he was frequently imprisoned in a room in which there was no furniture but a clock; to relieve the tedium of confinement he minutely examined its several parts, and their relation to each other, and the end of its construction. This developed his mechanical aptitudes and tastes. But suppose while he was studying cog and wheel and dial, and when he had discovered the moving cause in weights and pendulum, he had stopped short of the question, "Who made the clock?" he would have been like many medical men who fail to differentiate causation and results.

The pupil is tempted to think that every thing can be accounted for by the term *law*, without one thought of the Supreme Legislator and Governor of the universe. Law is an ambiguous term, and we derive our ideas concerning it from the imperfect analogy which human legislation suggests. Says Dr. Carpenter: "It might be wished that the term *law* could be altogether banished from science, if it was not that, when carefully examined, any law of man's designing is found to be nothing else than an expression of certain predetermined uniformities of action of the Governing Power."

In the metaphysical haze which floats around the arbitrary term "law" the pupil fails to discern God,



and by a parity of method he sometimes also fails to find his soul.

Speaking of life, Bichat writes: "The functions of the animal form two distinct classes. One of these consists of an habitual succession of assimilation and concretion. By the other he perceives surrounding objects, reflects on his sensations, performs voluntary motions under their influence, and generally communicates, by the voice, his pleasures, or his pains, his desires or his fears. The assembled functions of the latter class form the animal life.

If I ask Vaucanson what is the *cause* of the wheels going round in the clock and the hands on the dial? he does not say the weights and pendulum, but the *intelligence of the designer*. If I ask Bichat what is the cause of sensation, perception, and will? he says animal life. If I ask *what is* animal life? he says will, perception, and sensation. Is this not reasoning in a circle? You will find many physicians who hold that the best man is the highest product of the best organs and circumstances, and all that is necessary to perfect man is to improve his physical organization, give him good and wholesome diet at hygienic intervals, supply him with liberal quantities of pure oxygen and sunlight, clothe him with suitable raiment and comfortable shelter, preserve him from all mephitic influences, provide him with congenial company and pursuits, and the conditions of his happiness will be established, and, being felicitous in his circumstances, he will be virtuous. This would be so if man were merely an animal, but he is something more. He is influenced and improved by the character of the impressions made upon him through his senses.

but from within proceed the greater and grander elements of his higher life. He has sources of thought, feeling, hope, joy, and sorrow, to which inferior animals are strangers; and, culture him as you may, his apprehensions and aspirations will leap the hedge-rows of education, and, like the English lark, springing from its fragrant nest in the meadow, will soar and sing toward the sun.

Man is largely indebted to his physical organism; but when bone and blood and muscle and membranes and gland and ganglia are in perfect health, the heart may be out of harmony, and though it beats the standard measure of pulsations, it may be burdened with a sigh or sorrow that makes that perfect body a prison-house.

The physician is always demanding facts. The prevailing method in our medical colleges is to teach medicine purely as an *experimental* art; and man, as an animal, is looked at in every articulation of his framework, and in every organ of his anatomy. The cry is, "Away with theory; give us *practice*." All this is but saying "seeing is believing," and yet no two men see exactly alike.

Lalande said: "I have gazed far into infinite space with my telescope, and star after star and system after system have kindled their splendors in the spectrum, but there is no God between my object-glass and Uranus—for I have scanned the intervening field." Ehrenberg turns his microscope upon a drop of stagnant water and declares that it swarms with *infusoria* wonderfully wrought; he discovers myriads of creatures crystallized in a single cubic inch of slate, and he says at the other end of the universe—the infinitesimal—"I see no foot-prints of a God." The chemist analyzes the elements

and finds their constituents, oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen, but his retort has revealed to him no God. And so the surgeon says: "I have been through man with my scalpel; I have looked at all his cells, and I have resolved him into his elements, and he has no soul. Man is a compound of bones and blood, of bowels and brains, of potash and phosphorus. Look here! This is a perfect picture of a heart—it is an admirable blood-pump—and *this* is a splendid brain, a curious congeries of cells and labyrinthine fibres. In neither head nor heart have I found a soul.

Ah, if Lalande could have looked at the heavens with the eye of a Newton, the stars would have been eloquent of the Divine glory, and the tented firmament would have been frescoed by the Divine handiwork. Had Ehrenberg looked at the microscopic crustacea with the glasses of Hugh Miller, he would have seen traced the footprints of the Creator. If the chemist would but analyze with the retort of J. Lawrence Smith, he would discern the evidences of a creating cause in every atom and gas. If the surgeon would but see man with the penetrating vision of a Paget, he would behold reason enthroned upon the brain and love mitred in the heart and immortality templated in a soul. We may call it by whatever name a cavilling caprice may elect, but man thinks, feels, wills, acts. The why and wherefore of his thinking is not answered by scalpel, retort, or microscope.

Diogenes, the cynic, left his tub, and with a lamp went through the market-place to find a man. Had he gone within himself he would have found the object of his search. There is an inner world, and he who would



employ material tests to its analysis is as silly as a philosopher who would seek to weigh universal gravity upon steelyards and balances. If what can be determined by mere anatomy and physiology or chemistry is to be the standard of judgment in estimating the worth of a man, then many animals rival him in physical organism.

Spence relates that Mr. Pope one day was with an English Lord, when his nephew, a Guinea trader, came in. "Nephew," said his Lordship, "you have the honor of beholding the two greatest men in England." The nephew responded: "I do n't know how great men you may be, but I don't like your looks. I have often bought a man better than both of you, all muscles and bones, for ten guineas." The method I am reprobating estimates men by avoirdupois weight, and measures them with the draper's tape-line. "The nerves," says Cabaniss, "they are the man." And is the end of our noble profession to reduce us to a mere pig-iron materialism? If we are to understand our art to mean simply knowledge of man as an animal and his diseases, in what respect are we different from the veterinary surgeon?

But how many, alas! are prepared to give an affirmative answer to Emerson's catechism: "Are the opinions of men on right and wrong, on fate or causation, at the mercy of a broken sleep or an indigestion? Is his belief in God no deeper than a stomach evidence?" According to this degrading theory, if you would make man a poet, give him hasheesh; if an orator, port wine; if conscience-smitten, prescribe blue-mass. If there be a mere animal law of hereditary descent governing mat-

ter, and, through that, mind and morals, what can one do against congenital diseases, against scrofula and a score of other maleficent forces known to be transmissible? Where are we to locate the *responsibility*, by which we claim the right to enact laws and to inflict penalties? If man is on a level with brute animals, where is the satisfaction that meets his desires as those of others are met?

The aspect of the brute creation is one of happiness. How wide the gulf between that and the experience of man! The little sparrow, twittering its gratitude under my window for the crumbs upon which it makes its modest meal, is just as happy as a bird can be. The insect brood, singing in the shimmers of the summer sunset, what brook they of the morrow? How complacently does the caterpillar weave its shroud and wait its transfiguration! What a difference between the cuckoo's note and the "Song of the Shirt!"

The whole range of nature does not afford a Five Points of Wretchedness. Ah, if there is no future for man—of all God's creation the grandest figure is the meanest!

I propose now to indicate some of the temptations to which I think physicians are peculiarly liable. And the first I mention is *familiarity with scenes of suffering*. This tends to blunt the tender sensibilities, for the effect of frequently repeated emotions is to lessen rather than to strengthen their power. The young surgeon as he tries his prentice hand trembles; but by repeated operations he gains steadiness of nerve. For the practical ends of surgery this is well, as the surgeon, even more than the physician, requires great self-possession—

the cool calm of intellect in the presence of peril. Religion is so much a matter of emotion, so far as it is an experience, that the effect of long medical service is to create a condition of heart not easily accessible to that class of feelings which are, or are supposed to be, the testimony of the Divine favor.

I do not mean exactly to say that the physician necessarily becomes what is known as hard-hearted. No class of men are more given to philanthropy. Very much of their ministration is a free-will offering to the poor. Their heroic self-sacrifice, manifested in time of pestilence, when the greed of gain and pride of character afford no sufficient explanation for their exposure to the plague, is a matter that needs only to be mentioned to be honored. The daring they have manifested on the field of battle, performing calmly their acts of mercy while the air is whistling with bullets and the scream of hurtling shells is heard above, have shown that patriotism and philanthropy were in holy wedlock in their chivalrous breasts. Ours is a profession of which a reverend Bishop has spoken as eminent for genius, learning, and humanity; for industry, experiment, and persevering, self-denying, perilous researches; for a patient submission to peevishness, a generous sacrifice of pleasure, and a manly forgiveness of the basest selfishness and ingratitude. Speaking of his own obligations to our profession, he says: "To medicine, I owe an unspeakable debt. Whenever I have eaten the bread of sorrow, or drunk the cup of affliction, she has been my Good Samaritan; she has calmed my anxieties, mitigated my pains, awakened my hopes, and often counted my pulse, and cooled my tongue at the midnight as



well as the morning watch; and when, with tears, I have offered remuneration, she has gently replaced my slender purse beneath my pillow."

It is not so much, then, that humane interest is lost for the sufferer, as that familiarity with suffering tends to make the physician stoical in all things that relate to himself. He becomes so accustomed to serve others in suffering that he becomes, relatively, indifferent to himself. He is apt often to be perplexed by the problem of pain, and to ask the annoying question, "Would a God who is infinitely compassionate entail so much of want and woe on his creatures as exist?" With many the answer to this is Atheism. They argue, "Better no God than an Infinite Borgia on the Throne of the Universe." If the inquiry ended with a study of the pathological and therapeutic indications of pain, the physician might proceed to its relief without a shadow of scepticism creeping over the mind; but the question that will not down at the bidding, and which puzzles thought is, "Why does God permit pain?" Many, failing to answer this satisfactorily, dismiss it by saying, "There is no God."

Of course we can not think the existence of pain is essential to the Divine happiness. If we find any key to the solution of the mystery, it must be in the discovery of some rectoral or beneficent offices it performs for the creature. The mere sentinel theory is inadequate to afford the desired solution. It has color of acceptability only when applied to the eye and the general periphery of the body; and yet it is not satisfying to say that the eye is so sensitive that it closes when any disagreeable atom or acid threatens it, and

that having felt pain once it is ever on the guard against things that produce it. God could have encased the eye in a crystal that would have thoroughly protected it from dust or acids. The deep organs of the body are subject to frequent pains, and these surely can not be regarded as pickets thrown out or sentinels on outpost duty; they are rather enemies in the very heart of the camp. Nor is it sufficient to say of a large class of pains that they are rectoral, Nature's *conatus*, by which it seeks to relieve itself of abnormal conditions; such, for instance, as the effort Nature makes to eject a gall-stone. An anodyne administered relieves the pain and allows Nature's writ of ejectment to prosecute its execution. Nor is it conclusive to say that the pleasure succeeding relief from pain is a fit and full compensation for the agony experienced by the sufferer.

The atheist finds his solution of pain by looking on animal life as simply the product of an infinite series of changes in nature, and pain as a *necessary* condition of a physical organism, as friction is inseparable from all mechanical operations. The physician has been so accustomed to study man as a mere animal being that the temptation to the atheistic view is peculiarly strong, but is the result of a partial study of man and a hasty generalization of purely physical facts.

If the physician would carry his meditations farther forward into a wider field, and take in man as an immortal and responsible moral being, a subject of a great Theocratic government, supported by a vast system of rewards and punishments, he would bring new factors into the problem, that would assist him to a solution without the necessity of resorting to atheism. Once

in the field of thought suggested by the existence of a God and the immortality of man, he would soon have attention riveted on the fact that there is *mental* as well as physical pain, and that every violation of mental or moral law is inseparably related to its appropriate punishment as every disturbed condition of the body is with uneasiness or pain. There is no difference of opinion as to the fact that a moral wrong is accompanied with what we call compunction of conscience, or remorse. This is the soul's protest against wrongdoing. But sin works its own insensibility.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien  
As to be hated needs but to be seen ;  
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

Now what is needed is that there should be some sharp, goading process prodding the body and shooting conviction through the nerves to the consciousness of the offender. Nearly all moral evil takes the direction of and ends *in* sensuality. If the drunkard never had a headache, a nausea, or shaky nerves, or *delirium tremens*, and the dreadful draught were allowed to pervert reason and conscience, where would the evils end produced by inebriation?

Besides, others are deterred from like courses of evil by seeing the pain wrought in the bodies of offenders. Thus pain, that is the result of wrong-doing, is not only a penalty to the guilty, but a warning to the innocent. Again, pain quickens in us an apprehension that we are living under a moral government, and awakens desires for a better state of existence.

No one doubts the benignity of purpose for which men enter society and organize governments, yet *law*—



the administration of public justice—is a terrible avenger to the guilty.

Well, if God's government exists for the weal of souls, and *goodness* is the highest expression of citizenship in the universe, the Great Sovereign must protect the loyal to right and duty, not only by punishing the guilty, but by making outlawry heinous.

Pain is the reading of God's riot-act to the mob, bidding it disperse or suffer. It is true, too, that patient suffering has a very chastening and elevating effect. Out of it are born the virtues of fortitude, meekness, and resignation. It furnishes the occasion for the exercise of the sweetest amenities and charities of human nature. Sympathy and the loving sisterhood of graces that follow in its train gather about the couch of suffering.

Pain is a great teacher of human fraternity. Plague and pestilence have done more than any other agency to make men conscious of the close and indivisible bond that holds the race in brotherhood.

Among a depraved people in the East, the Asiatic cholera was born in the slums of their degradation, and, marching westward, princes and peasants, sages and savages, fell a common prey to the dread destroyer. Thus the pestilence teaches the unity of the race and a community of interest. On its yellow flag is inscribed: "If one member suffer, *all* suffer together."

Neither rank nor riches can exalt us above the reach of pestilence born in the bogs and lazar-houses of human woe. The plague, generated among the filthy sailors of the Piræus, marched down the Agora of Athens, and climbed the Acropolis and smote the

Arcopagus. What a mighty argument does pestilence present to civilization and Christianity to reclaim and reform the masses weltering in the wastes of wretchedness! The Canongates of vice must be reformed and purified, else the destruction that wasteth at noonday and night will issue from the haunts of hunger and hells of crime to visit the vitals of our best beloved and lay waste our own fair homes.

The second peculiar temptation I mention is that much that impresses the ordinary beholder as a testimony to the value of Christian experience to support the dying is readily referred by the physician to other causes. Death-bed scenes are often referred to as evidences of Christianity. The Doctor knows that resignation to death is often the direct product of decayed and enfeebled physical powers or the subjugating influences of pain. Also, that certain nervous conditions, produced by disease or the influence of opiates, are the cause of rapturous visions that delight the sick and cheer the dying. He hears so much made of this at funerals that, while he in his goodness of heart will allow the preacher the benefit of the innocent deception, and the bereaved friends the comfort afforded by the pleasing misapprehension, he secretly sets this all down to superstition and ignorance, and then proceeds to include all religious experience in the like category. **This is fallacious reasoning.**

Christ's Christianity teaches the sublime art of holy living. It lays down this test: "By their fruits ye shall know them." The Gospel should be tried by itself. Let a man adopt Christ's principles and obey his commandments, and he can be trusted in all the

relations of life, and he needs no ravishing ecstasies in the hour of death to assure survivors that he has joined the spirits of just men made perfect.

Lastly, the physician is tempted to misanthropy. He becomes the victim of so much and constantly cumulative ingratitude that he says, in his haste, all men are base ingrates. How often do those he has most faithfully served, whose diseases have produced his keenest and most protracted anxieties, even robbing him of appetite for food or ability for sleep, turn against him with words of undeserved reproach and transfer their influence and patronage to some itinerant pretender or unblushing local charlatan? How often, too, is his hard-earned fee withheld from him by those whose feet should be winged to bear him the price of his skill and fidelity!

Let him think of the Great Exemplar who "came unto his own, and his own received him not." Let him think that a richer benediction than human applause may light from on high upon the scene of his toils. Let him comfort himself in the inalienable love of that faithful few who appreciate his worth and hold him enshrined in their heart of hearts as the most sacred of images.

And now, young gentlemen, permit me to remind you that success is, generally, the product and reward of unremitting toil. If you make the most, in after life, of the advantages we have sought to afford you here, you must *think*; for patient, powerful, and persevering thought *alone* can make you intellectually strong—while diligent, careful, and consecutive practice will *alone* make you skillful and successful. The world



to which you go has many allurements to decoy you to a dalliance with duty, and the surrender of your reason to the fancies and follies that but beguile for awhile to wreck and ruin.

When Ulysses sailed the shore of the Sirens he filled his companions' ears with wax, and had himself tied to the mast and thus escaped their enchantment. If you would avoid the shoals upon which reason and conscience are so often wrecked, close the senses and bind the intellect with strong withes. Finally, cherish and cultivate that profession to which we, this hour, formally introduce you. Enter upon it with motives transcending the desire for reward, whether of pelf or power. Honor it by diligent and faithful service, and as an instrument of usefulness. Take to yourself the comfort that much of your work is purely humanitarian, and that its recompense is not to be measured by the money standard, or by even the gratitude of those whom you freely serve.

Go on your way in the line of perpetual rectitude, and walk it unfalteringly.

"What is your duty here? To tend  
From good to better—thence to best;  
Grateful to drink life's cup—then bend  
Unmurmuring to your bed of rest;  
And so to live, that when the sun  
Of your existence sinks in night,  
Memorials sweet of mercies done  
May shrine your names in memory's light."

And now, gentlemen of the graduating class, the best wishes of the faculty go with you. Rejoicing always in your success, and proud of any reputation you may achieve, for it will be for your *Alma Mater*, as well as for yourselves, we bid you God-speed and an affectionate good-bye.















